

THE BEACON

A PAPER FOR THE SUNDAY SCHOOL
AND THE HOME



VOLUME I.

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FLIGHT INTO EGYPT—Bouguereau.

You can help your fellow-men; you must help them is by being the noblest and best man
help your fellow-men; but the only way you can that it is possible for you to be.

To-day.

You asked me for the golden time—
I bid you "seize the hour,"
And fill it full of earnest work,
While yet you have the power.
To-day the golden time for joy
Beneath the household eaves;
To-day the royal time for work,
For "bringing in the sheaves."

MARGARET E. SANGSTER.

For The Beacon.

Mabel's Telegraph.

BY MARY A. HALEY.

Blanche and Mabel were dear little friends and neighbors. Their homes were separated by a wide lawn shaded by pine and maple trees, and on this lawn Mabel had a tent where both little girls played at housekeeping and had picnic parties.

At the beginning of the spring vacation Mabel was very unhappy, for Blanche was ill with scarlet fever, and no one outside the house, except the doctor, could see her.

About this time Mr. and Mrs. Rose, Mabel's parents, expected to go to New York to a wedding.

"Will it be safe for us to go, now that the fever is so near?" asked Mrs. Rose.

Mr. Rose laughed. "Why, certainly, the germs cannot fly across our lawn; and, if Aunt Lucy can come here, she will take perfect care of our little pet and guard her as well as we could ourselves."

So the matter was settled. Aunt Lucy and Mabel loved each other and were very happy to be together for a week. Auntie promised to keep the window closed that looked toward Blanche's house, and not to allow Mabel even to walk on the sidewalk near Blanche's door.

Mr. and Mrs. Rose had a pleasant journey, enjoyed all the wedding festivities, and were planning to spend a few days in sight-seeing, when Mrs. Rose received the following letter:

Dear Mama,—I am having the most lovelly time you ever saw. I have been talking to Blanche all day. She sits up in her rapper and she shoed me all her dolls and all the things people sent her and I shoed her all my dolls and told her all about you and papa going to the wedding and the brooklin brig and everything. O its grand! We miss you come home soon.

from MABEL.

Poor Mrs. Rose! She could hardly speak as she put the letter into her husband's hand. "I don't understand it," said she. "Lucy was to keep the windows closed, and Mabel was not to go even on their sidewalk."

Mr. Rose seemed perplexed. "She must

have been in the house, she says they showed their dolls and talked about our trip. We must take the next train for home."

"It seemed as if the train would never get to Boston, and with hearts filled with anxiety they finally reached their own home. Mabel, hearing their voices, rushed down to meet them.

"O mamma! I just told Blanche the door-bell rang, but I did not think you rang it."

"Told Blanche?" echoed Mr. Rose. "Is Blanche upstairs?"

"No, papa, she's at home. But come up and see the lovely fun I'm having. Oh, great fun!"

Her parents followed her to the guest-room, and such a sight! The floor, bed, bureau, and chairs were covered with large pieces of brown wrapping-paper on which were written in large letters the various messages which Mabel had been sending to Blanche.

"Look, mamma! You can see Blanche at that window. She's waiting to know who rang the bell. I must tell her."

Seizing a piece of paper and a little paint brush which she dipped in the ink, with the speed of a typewriter she dashed off the words, "thayve come." Blanche disappeared for a moment, then returned with her reply, "That's nice."

"Oh, such fun," said Mabel, almost breathless in her excitement and joy. "If it wasn't for dear Aunt Lucy, I never would have had all this fun. I saw Blanche sitting by the window, and I said, 'I wish I could speak to Blanche,' and she told me to take a piece of paper, and write 'Hello' on it in large letters, and when Blanche saw that she would know that I was thinking of her. So I did it, and Blanche wrote back, and we have been doing it ever since."

Mr. Rose sighed and then smiled. "And we might now have been crossing the 'brook-lin brig' if we had not been so silly as to take fright about nothing."

Aunt Lucy now appeared. "Has anything happened? I thought you were to stay a week."

"We thought so, too," said Mr. Rose, "but when we heard that Mabel and Blanche were talking together all day, and playing dolls, we felt obliged to come home."

"How did you hear such nonsense as that?"

"From a very bright little girl who always tells the truth." And he handed her Mabel's letter.

The Little Loaf.

Many years ago there was a great famine in Germany, and the poor people suffered from hunger. A rich man who loved children sent for twenty of them and said to them: "In this basket there is a loaf of bread for each of you. Take it and come back again every day till the famine is over. I will give you a loaf each day."

The children were very hungry. They seized the basket and struggled to get at the largest loaf. They even forgot to thank the man who had been kind to them. After a few minutes of quarrelling and snatching for bread, every one ran away with his loaf except one little girl, named Gretchen. She stood there alone at a little distance from the gentleman. Then, smiling, she took up the last loaf, the smallest of all, and thanked him with all her heart.

Next day the children came again, and they behaved as badly as ever. Gretchen,

who would not push with the rest, received only a tiny loaf scarcely half the size of the others. But, when she came home, and her mother began to cut the loaf, out dropped six shining coins of silver.

"Oh, Gretchen!" exclaimed her mother, "this must be a mistake. The money does not belong to us. Run as quick as you can and take it back to the gentleman."

So Gretchen carried it back; but, when she gave the gentleman her mother's message, he said: "No, no, it was not a mistake. I had the silver baked into the smallest loaf in order to reward you. Remember that the person who is contented to have a small loaf rather than quarrel for a larger one will find blessings that are better than money baked in bread."—Adapted from "Cowardly's Moral Lessons" by Ella Lyman Cabot, in *Ethics for Children*.

For The Beacon.

Our Red-Coat Mystery.

BY "JAC" LOWELL.

Part V.

Billy, Reddy, and I, whose wheels had suffered nothing except loss of bells, leaped to our seats and obeyed the shout.

We rode wildly and recklessly, but we soon realized that, unless he met with a fall, we had no chance of overtaking the rider who flew before us.

We did know that we had a chance to see him, however, if we could keep close enough to watch him as he sped past Casti's. Even that meant foolhardy riding, but we increased our pace, and were within ten yards of our rival when he shot into the bright space before Casti's door.

To our great surprise, the light revealed a scorching cyclist in a red cap and red coat. Red-coat King to the life!

"Why, that was King again!" gasped Billy, as we slackened up.

"It certainly was!" said I.

"How could it be?" asked Reddy. "I'll own that it looked just like him, but— Well, this business beats me! Come on back, and have a club council."

We went back, told our story, and called a council. There was a great deal of boyish reasoning and preaching then and there, but things did not "come to a head" until Sandy Hobbs, our youthful sage, had his say.

"I tell you what, fellows," said Sandy, in deep, serious tones, "there's mystery back of this thing! Red-coat King is out speeding late at night! Mystery! His starting-point is unknown. Mystery! We see him whiz across the light. We come back, find our wheels disturbed, chase an intruder, and suddenly discover that the intruder and King are one and the same person, though how he can be in two places at once is beyond our understanding! Yes, we are in the midst of a cloud of mystery, but we are going to clear it up, and don't you forget it!"

When there is a mystery to clear up, it is usually safe to trust the task to a crowd of wide-awake boys.

The members of Branton Road Cycle Club were anything but sleepy lads, and were not slow at accepting Sandy's challenge to pursue the present "cloud of mystery" and disperse it.

For the next three nights we watched in vain for a sight of Red-coat King.

On the fourth night we tried a different scheme. We stacked our bicycles in the narrow lane back of the lilac bushes, and,

since these wheels were new ones, for which we worked hard and saved faithfully, we decided to leave guards to protect them. Reddy Howe chose the guards,—Billy Wales, Dick Ames, and "yours truly."

We would have much rather gone with the others to the wall near Casti's, where they were to watch for King, but we obeyed orders, settled down in the tall grass behind the wheels, and waited.

The other fellows had been out of hearing for about five minutes, when we saw a dark figure creep out of the lilac clump and move toward the line of wheels.

"It's King," whispered Billy.

"And see what he's doing!" murmured Dick. "He's puncturing the tires!"

"After him, quick!" I shouted.

At the sound of my voice the figure near the lilacs seized a wheel from the pile, leaped to the seat, and went pushing out of sight.

In less than a minute we were on our own wheels, and after him.

It was very dark, but the hum of his swiftly moving chain told us that he was not far ahead. We knew that he was riding desperately, but we were soon aware that we were gaining upon him.

"Something ails his wheel!" said Dick. "He's riding on flat tires. Hear 'em thump?"

Dick was right. In his haste to get away the intruder had made a mistake and seized one of the bicycles which he had punctured.

Realizing that with flat tires he had no chance to outride us, he suddenly slackened up and jumped off.

Just as we came speeding up, he tossed the wheel directly in our path, bolted through the road-side bushes and into the field.

Dick managed to swerve to one side, but Billy and I crashed into the abandoned wheel and went sprawling to the ground.

"This way! Hurry up!" yelled Dick, jumping off, and pushing through the bushes.

Rubbing our bruises, we leaped to our feet and followed him.

The moon, peeping out in friendly fashion, showed us a red-coated figure sprinting across the fields. He was headed for the East Branton woods. We must catch him before he reached the shelter of the thick underbrush!

It was hard to make much speed in the stubby field, but, encouraged by Dick's gains on the "red-coat," Billy and I plunged rapidly on, determined to have a hand in the "catch."

Almost in reach of the bright coat's fluttering tail, Dick stumbled and fell.

The red runner dropped pace a bit, to look back and laugh. That little pause wrought his defeat. Billy and I shot forward on the wings of our "second wind," and just as the fellow reached the first clump of brushwood we pounced upon him and held him captive.

"Now, Mr. King," said Billy, "it will do no good to squirm. We're three to one, and we've got you! We aren't going to use you as you did Chubby Jenks, but we're not going to let you go right away! Understand?"

Our puffing captive decided that obedience was best, so we slowly led him back toward the road. Dick, limping painfully on a badly wrenched ankle, brought up the rear.

To be continued.

It is not what stays in our memories, but what has passed into our characters, that is the possession of our lives.

*You cannot dream yourself into a character:
you must hammer and forge yourself into one.*

For The Beacon.

Memory Shells.

BY CHARLES N. SINNETT.

"Where are you going, Uncle Teddy?"

Roy's voice hadn't a bit of teasing in it. Down in the corner of his brown eyes there was a look which meant, "I'd like ever so much to go with you." But the spot was so small that uncle knew that, if he said, "I am going on the beach, but it will not be best for you to go to-day," Roy would answer, "All right."

But uncle wanted the dear little boy with him. Do you think it was because the "wanting-to-go look" was so small in his brown eyes? So he slipped his hand into Roy's, and said, "I'm going down to the beach at the head of the harbor, and I want you with me all the time I'm there."

"Oh, I know," cried Roy, as his happy feet pattered along. "That's where you used to play when you were a boy like me, And you often think of it all, now that you live away on the prairies in Dakota. Oh, we can get such a fine lot of shells! We'll string them so that you can hang them up in your shackel,—is that what you call your house on the prairie?"

"No, Roy, shack is the name. But you know just the name I shall give to the strings of shells."

Roy thought hard for a moment, and then he said, as he clapped his hand, "Yes, memory shells, because they'll make you think of the happy old days here on the shore."

"A good guess," smiled uncle, as he stooped down to gather the brown, white, and golden shells.

Pretty soon Roy's face grew very sober as he cuddled up close to Uncle Teddy.

"Have you got any wife?" he asked anxiously.

"No."

"Got any little boys?"

"No, I live all alone on my claim on the prairie."

"Got any little girls?"

"Not one of my own, Roy."

"Well, you haven't got anything out there, have you, uncle? You must be lonesome."

"I'd like to help you," he said, leaning his head against uncle's knee. "But I know papa can't spare you his wife. And he needs me here."

"But there is a little boy who helps me a great deal every day when I'm away off on the prairies," said uncle. "And, when I hang one of these strings of memory shells on the wall near his picture, I shall think of him more than ever. And the lonesome feeling will almost all go away."

Uncle's arm slipped around Roy's neck. "Will I truly help you so far off?" the little boy asked. "It's so many, many miles."

"Yes, and you will help lots of others, too, for I shall give strings of these shells to all the children in the houses on the prairie. They never had a chance to see the great ocean, and play on a beach like this. And I shall tell them of the little boy who loves me so."

"That's a good way to keep memories," said Roy. "It's so much better than picking up things and thinking only of just how happy you used to be."



A CONTENTED PUSS.

Courtesy of Our Dumb Animals.

Small.

An old Hindoo once said to his son: "Bring me a fruit of that tree and break it open, and tell me what is there."

The son did so, and replied, "Only some small seeds."

"Break one of them," continued the father, "and tell me what you see."

"Nothing, my lord," answered the boy.

"My child," said the father, "where you see nothing there dwells a mighty tree."

The story is to teach us how important may be the things which seem to us small and trivial.

For The Beacon.

Little Foxes.

BY KATE S. GATES.

"No," said Uncle Eben quite positively. "I don't like the way you boys talk about 'fibbing' and being 'sharp.'"

"If you don't tell the truth, you tell a lie; and, if you aren't honest, you are dishonest, as I look at it."

"Maybe the boy who would take a penny or two to-day that didn't belong to him wouldn't think for a moment of stealing a \$1,000 or even a \$100, but I should not feel sure that he would not come to it eventually."

"My father used to tell me that there was nothing small in a world where a mud creek swells into an Amazon, and the stealing of a penny may end on the scaffold. When one begins to go down hill, he is liable to get going fast most any time."

"I remember once a great naturalist was in our town. He had some eighteen or twenty little snakes in a glass-covered box. They weren't but a day old and about the size of a lead pencil."

"But, when he stirred them up a little, they coiled precisely as a grown rattler would, and he said their bite was just as poisonous."

"I reckon it is the same with sin. What you call little sins are just as ugly and dangerous as what seem to be greater ones. If one never takes the first little sip, he will never be a drunkard; and a man that will not touch a penny that does not belong to him will never rob a bank."

"It is like climbing a mountain. You go toiling up, step by step, and it takes a long time. But, if you chance to make a misstep and fall, down you go like a flash."

"A fib or a little cheat, as you call them, are missteps. You don't know where they will land you."

"And don't get the notion that you can slip along any sort of a way, and then, when a sudden temptation comes, that you can come off victorious with flying colors. You are making your character minute by minute. See to it there are no bad places in it."

How it blesses the street, a face laughing all to itself. As one sees it, the corners of his mouth begin to twitch, too, with the God's gift, eyes light, strangers greet knowingly, hearts soften, spirits rise, lives brighten, and the world grows friendly within the circle of the merry echo.

WILLIAM C. GANNETT.

For The Beacon.

Serpents and Sin.

BY CHARLES W. CASSON.

I remember attending a temperance meeting when I was a boy, and hearing a story that impressed me very much. It was that of a man who had made a pet of a snake called a boa constrictor. When it was very young and small, he played with it and petted it. By and by it grew to be very large, many inches through and many feet long, and still the man played with it.

One day he was showing it on the stage of a circus side show, letting it coil its huge body about him, as it had done many times before. But this time it suddenly tightened its coils, and with its tremendous strength crushed out the life of the man with whom it had played since it was small and young.

And I remember how the speaker told us that alcohol was just like that serpent. At first men played with it, drinking when they pleased and stopping when they pleased. It was just a matter of a social glass that helped to make life more cheery and jolly. But at last it became so powerful that the very life of the man was crushed out by its fearful power.

The speaker was right. After twenty years I know that he spoke perfectly truly. And I would like to take up all this column to make it clear to every boy who reads *The Beacon*. There is danger indeed in the use of all kinds of intoxicating liquor. It is too often a serpent that twines itself at last about the body of its victim, and casts him into a drunkard's grave.

But this is true of all sin. Whoever yields to that which he knows to be wrong, at first fancying that he can just play with it, is running into just the same danger as the man who played with the boa constrictor. There comes at last a moment when the sin becomes stronger than the sinner, and the result may be death. It is always defeat and degradation, at least.

There are many resemblances between serpents and sin. Both are attractive to the eye. Some serpents are most beautiful creatures. And they are found in beautiful places, among flowers and ferns, where you are least looking for anything dangerous. And they move very quietly and strike very quickly. Only a few of them are as honorable as the rattler, who gives you fair warning before he strikes.

And sin is often beautiful at first, and attracts the eye. There is no ugliness that gives fair warning or keeps one away. There is no danger sign, such as "Look out!" "Poison!" "Beware!" If there were, it would be very easy to escape from sin and its evil effects. Instead it is necessary for each one of us to keep a strict watch out ourselves for the wrong and evil.

We are wise to remember that it is not well to judge anything as good merely by its beauty. Some of the most deadly serpents are the most beautiful. Some of the most poisonous plants are very fair and attractive. Some of the sins that make a person impure and vile are very pleasant to look at. But whoever judges any of these things by their beauty alone will sadly regret it.

But what is most necessary to know and remember is the power of sin. At first we are masters, having power to merely play with the evil, just as the man did with the snake when it was small. It could not have crushed him if it tried then. And at first one can drink or gamble or lie, and still be

able easily to stop. But, as one continues drinking and gambling and lying, it becomes harder and harder to quit.

The safe thing to do is for every boy and girl who reads this column to decide never to even play with sin. Then it has no chance to get hold of one, and so no chance to do as the boa constrictor did with the man who had once played with it without any fear of harm. Let every one of us be on the safe side by making our motto the words, "When in doubt, don't!"

QUESTION BOX.

What can we do to strengthen the teaching force in our Sunday school? We are not yet ready to pay salaries.

Whatever increases respect for the school in the minds of the congregation attracts to it the more capable people, and stimulates those already working in it to more earnest work. Let the minister, the church officers, the parish in its regular meetings, the alliance, and the parents as they gather in "parents' meetings" uphold the school as an interest of the highest importance, and the teaching done in the classes will rise to higher levels.

More directly, let the churches select the teachers by a regularly appointed committee, elect those teachers with the same formality with which other officers are elected, and install them with a solemn service approaching that which marks the beginning of a pastor's work. Let the teachers be made Life Members of the Sunday School Society, and sent, with expenses paid, to a Teachers' Institute, such as those at the Isles of Shoals and at Meadville. Let the parents invite them to their homes as honored guests, and let them hold receptions to which parents are invited and at which the common task of religious education is discussed. Provide all the Bible Dictionaries and books on the history and work of the Sunday school that can be used.

Finally, have it distinctly understood by formal contract with each teacher, if need be, that all this is done by the church on the understanding that the teachers be regular, prepare their work, and devote much time to their classes, not only on Sunday, but through the weeks. Give much, and demand much. People will undertake what appears to be worth doing, and will do well what the church expects to have well done.

Katie Spellain, who talked as if she had crossed the ocean seven times in her seven short years instead of once, said that the bark of a tree was the noise the wind made in the branches.

Katie was a heedless child in school. When she was called to bring her work to the desk, she continued the work, suddenly interested. Then the teacher called her again. "What should you do when I call you?" said the teacher. "Come right off, sharp as you speak," said Katie.

The school was repeating together one day the poem about the violet. The teacher, passing near Katie's desk, heard her say, "It might have greased a rosy bower instead of hiding there."

The word "dale" having been explained, the scholars were asked to put it in a sentence. Katie's hand waved wildly. "My mother does a dale of work," said she.

Interwoven is the love of liberty with every ligament of the heart. WASHINGTON.

RECREATION CORNER.

SPRINGFIELD, MASS.

Dear Editor,—I do not think the *enigma* column is very full, so I will send some. I love to do enigmas, and Sunday evenings we have great pleasure doing them. Hoping these are good enough to be published, I remain,

Ever most very truly yours,

MELBA L. MOORE.

ENIGMA XIX.

I am composed of 17 letters.

My 1, 15, 3, is a covering for the head.

My 3, 12, 6, 13, is a feeling of distress.

My 10, 6, 7, is a metal.

My 11, 2, 6, 16, is frozen rain.

My 4, 9, 8, is a color.

My 14, 17, 5, 16, is to cure.

My whole is an American officer in the Revolutionary War.

EDNA L. WEBB.

A GEOGRAPHY HUNT.

1. Find a town in Maine that is one of the Presidents of the United States.
2. Find a city in Ohio that is the name of a discoverer.
3. A city in Minnesota that is a man in the Bible.
4. A city in New Hampshire that is the name of a grape.
5. A city in Ireland that is what we put in bottles.
6. A city in Italy that is a girl's name.
7. A country in Europe that is what we have Thanksgiving.
8. A city in Germany that is a kind of steak.

JULIA M. PROCTOR.

MISSING NAMES.

Supply boys' names for the rhyming words.

He came and asked me for a job,
For short he said his name was —

The work was not too hard for him,
It might have been for little —

Some choose the mine, and some the mill,
But something else chose clever —

Yet even he could never fill
The place obtained by Cousin —

And rising higher than them all
Was plodding, persevering —

Ah, true, and he was bright and handy,
That other boy whom we called —

For some good things he could not tarry,
Like happy, smiling, steady —

And he who needed no rebuke
Was honest, earnest, able —

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 16.

ENIGMA XVII.—Penmanship.

TRANSPOSITIONS.—Hare, care, rare, dare; here, hire; hale, hate; hard, hark, harp, hart.

CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.—Rutherford B. Hayes.

Two small girls were having cambric tea with lump sugar. Said one, stirring industriously, "My lump's moderated."

THE BEACON.

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